

Psychology 120A: Introduction to Psychology
Fall 2011

Instructor:	Dr. Sarah Johnson	When:	T/R 10:20-11:30am
Phone:	610-625-7013	Where:	232 PPHAC
Office:	224 PPHAC	Office hours:	M & W 11:30am-1pm R 2:30-4pm, or by appt.
Email:	skjohnson@moravian.edu	Blackboard Pwd:	psyche
Website:	http://blackboard.moravian.edu/		

Overall Course Goal: This course will introduce you to the broad field of psychology, focusing on important research and theories about how people think, feel, act, etc., and emphasizing the similarities and differences between sub-disciplines within Psychology, as well as how this info can be useful to you in understanding the world and people around you on a daily basis.

Textbook: *Psychology in Modules*, 9th ed., by Myers. Additional readings will typically be journal articles available via Blackboard.

Specific Course Objectives: By the end of this course, you should be able to:

1. Discuss important theories and findings from major areas in psychology—e.g., perception, memory, development, personality, social, and abnormal—including knowing some of the important researchers, paradigms, and findings in these areas.
2. Better understand the language and terminology of psychology and science.
3. Understand how researchers go about investigating psychological processes, esp. knowing some of the important criteria of good scientific research and understanding what ethical issues are most relevant to this research as it pertains to psychology.
4. Discuss how research in many areas of psychology is relevant to everyday life.
5. Discuss how different areas of psychology look at the same question in different ways.
6. Develop an enjoyment of psychology both as a field of scientific study and in reference to your own life.

My expectations of you (to be filled in on first day of class):

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

Attendance:

Attending class will benefit you for multiple reasons: learning how to learn and think critically, discussion of specific tips for learning particular material, participation in activities designed to promote active learning and integration of info, gaining a better idea of my expectations for assignments or exams. You will be given **2 allowed absences**, and **starting with the third absence**, your **class participation grade will be reduced by 15 pts for each additional absence**—exceptions may be made in cases of emergency, as determined on a case by case basis. If you have a legitimate reason for missing class frequently, please see me. You are responsible for obtaining any information you miss, and there are some days on which attendance is required for full points on an assignment.

Course Evaluation:

Class Participation: You will earn CP points throughout the term by performing in-class activities such as writing a response to a topic question, filling out a handout, participating in a group discussion of an issue, or by completing an activity/short handout outside of class. Some of these CP points may be made up if you miss class, but sometimes you will not be able to make up missed points.

Homework assignments: Over the course of the term you will be given 5 homework assignments, sometimes in conjunction with reading an assigned article. Information about each assignment will be handed out 1-3 classes before it is due. The handouts will be available in class, but will also be posted online.

Choice module: Each student will choose from a set list of topics and conduct a project as delineated by a handout provided by me. The project will take the form of a journal-esque paper, discussing how the project was undertaken, problems encountered, how activities related to material from the book, etc. These topics will frequently correspond to chapters not covered in class and will give you a chance to tailor your coverage of topics to suit your own interests.

Exams: There will be four exams during the course of the semester. Test format will be a combination of multiple choice, short answer, and essay, and can include questions on anything in the assigned chapters, handouts, or readings even if not discussed in lecture. Study guides laying out important terms and sample questions will be posted on Blackboard as each test approaches. If you have a legitimate excuse for missing a test, contact me as soon as possible and we will arrange for a make-up. For some excuses, I may request documentation. If you know in advance that you will be absent during a test then you need to let me know as soon as possible before the exam.

Creative Presentations/Disorder Paper: There will be one larger paper and a corresponding group presentation, both of which will be organized around a particular disorder. The paper will address a series of questions regarding the disorder and will require the use of several empirical, documented sources. These papers will be completed and graded individually, whereas the presentation will be a group project, earning a group grade. Handouts providing more detailed information about these assignments will be distributed later in the semester.

Late policy for assignments: Late assignments/papers will be accepted for up to four days after the due date and, unless otherwise noted, will be *penalized one letter grade for every calendar day late* beginning at the specified time on the due date. After the 4-day period, a paper will not be accepted and a grade of 0 will be applied. No exceptions will be made for minor technical difficulties (e.g., printer mishaps), but other circumstances may allow for exceptions as determined by me on a case-by-case basis. Please do not email assignments except in cases of emergency and make sure you receive a response from me before you assume that I received it.

Note that it is within my purview as instructor to use qualitative judgments in determining grades for homework assignments, reaction papers, or test answers (e.g., essays).

Overall grades—point/percentage breakdown:

Class participation	~100	(13%)
Homework assignments (4 @ ~25 each)	100	(13%)
Choice module	120	(16%)
Exams (4 @ ~60 pts each)	245	(33%)
Creative presentations (group grade)	75	(10%)
<u>Disorder paper</u>	<u>110</u>	<u>(15%)</u>
	Total	750

Unless otherwise noted, I will use the following scale for translating letter grades and calculating final grades:

Letter	Score	Grade range	Letter	Score	Grade range
A	100	95-100	C	75	73-76
A-	92	90-94	C-	71	70-72
B+	88	87-89	D+	68	67-69
B	85	83-86	D	65	63-66
B-	81	80-82	D-	61	60-62
C+	78	77-79	F	0	0-59

Plagiarism and cheating: Any work that you turn in for this class must be entirely your own work. Any sources used must be properly documented, and I will ask you not to use any direct quotes in assignments. For more information on plagiarism and cheating, refer to the Student Handbook and the following website regarding academic responsibility at Moravian College:

<http://www.moravian.edu/studentLife/handbook/academic/academic2.html>. As this site explains, the consequences for cheating or plagiarism can range from getting a 0 for the assignment to receiving an F for the final course grade to expulsion, depending on the severity of the case and prior history of offenses. I will spend class time discussing plagiarizing, but ultimately it is your responsibility to come see me with questions about use of sources or collaboration with other students.

Disabilities: The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) provides for some accommodations to be made for students with certain disabilities. If you have such a disability and are willing to disclose it, you may take advantage of such accommodations. In order to do so, you are required to meet with Mr. Joseph Kempfer in the Office of Learning Services. Accommodations cannot be provided until I have received authorization from Mr. Kempfer. You should also consider taking advantage of the Learning Services Office if you are having difficulty academically in this (or any other) class. The office is located at 1307 Main St. (phone: 610-861-1510).

Participation in experiments: You will be required to participate in 1 hour of experimental research as part of your participation in this class. See the full description of this policy at the end of the syllabus.

Schedule (This schedule is tentative. I reserve the right to make announced changes or additions):

Week:	Topic:	Readings/Assignments:
1	Aug 30 T Introduction and course overview	
	Sept 1 R Scientific methods	Modules 1-3
2	Sept 6 T	Assignment 1 (principles of scientific method)
	Sept 8 R Brain	Modules 4-6
3	Sept 13 T Perception	Modules 18 & 21
	Sept 15 R <i>FALL CONVOCATION</i> – Meet in classroom and attend as a class	Assignment 2 (brain & vision trivia)
4	Sept 20 T Brain & Vision trivia contest	
	Sept 22 R Exam 1	
5	Sept 27 T Social Psychology/Ethics	Modules 56-58
	Sept 29 R	Module 7.2, Simons & Levin (1998)
6	Oct 4 T Motivation	Modules 36-37; Assignment 3 (change blindness); <i>Choice module selection</i>
	Oct 6 R	Fallon & Rozin (1985)
7	Oct 11 T Fall break – No class	
	Oct 13 R Development: Stage theories	Modules 13-16; Assignment 3 (weight preferences)
8	Oct 18 T Exam 2	
	Oct 20 R Memory	Modules 26-28
9	Oct 25 T	Modules 29-30; Roediger & Karpicke (2009)
	Oct 27 R Consciousness	Module 8, 10
10	Nov 1 T	Assignment 4 (dream analysis); <i>Disorder project assignments given</i>
	Nov 3 R Exam 3 – Dr. J out of town	

Week:	Topic:	Text Chs/Assignments:
11		
Nov 8 T	<i>Library tutorial – Dr. J out of town</i>	
Nov 10 R	Emotion	Modules 40-42
12		
Nov 15 T	Personality	Modules 45-47; Choice modules due
Nov 17 R		
13		
Nov 22 T	Disorder Presentations (2 groups)	Modules 48, 53-54
Nov 24 R	No class [Thanksgiving break]	
14		
Nov 29 T	Disorder presentations (3 groups)	
Dec 1 R	Disorder presentations (3 groups)	Disorder papers due by Friday 5pm
15		
Dec 6 T	Disorders & Therapy	
Finals Wk	Exam 4 – Tues Dec. 13 @ 1:30pm	

Exam 1 – Modules 1-3, 4-6, 18, 21

Exam 2 – Modules 7.2, 13-16, 36-37, 56-58, Change blindness & Weight perception articles

Exam 3 – Modules 8, 10, 26-30, Memory article

Exam 4 – Modules 40-42, 45-47, 48, 53-54

Required Research Participation: You will be required to participate in 1 hour of research being conducted by students in PS212 (Experimental Methods and Data Analysis II), or by honors or independent study students or faculty. This experience allows you to view the research process first hand and to support other students who will in turn support you when you are ready to conduct your own PSYC 212 experiment.

If you have objections to participating in research, you may arrange to complete an alternative, written assignment, which will involve reading a psychological article. In order to do the alternative assignment, you must meet with your professor to arrange it **by week 8 of the semester**. After that point, you may still have the opportunity to complete the research requirement by participating in experiment sessions, but you will not be able to do a written assignment. Please be aware that experiments may not be offered at the very end of the semester, so be sure to sign up early!

More information about research participation (e.g., how to sign up) will be provided later in the semester, when experiment opportunities start to become available.

When you sign up for a research experiment, please be sure to record the time and location of the session. As many experiments require that students begin a task at the same time, please plan to show up on-time for your sessions. Showing up late may result in your not being able to participate in the experiment!

Failure to complete the required participation (or the alternative assignment) will result in a **reduction of your class grade by 1/3rd letter grade** (e.g., from a B to a B-). The entire required hour needs to be completed to avoid this deduction (i.e., completing ½ hour only will still result in the full deduction).

If you fail to attend an experiment session for which you signed up, the required hours of research participation will increase to 2 hours. If you then fail to show up a second time for a scheduled experiment session, then you will forfeit all extra credit opportunities (including extra research hours you already completed for extra credit in the course) and will face a **reduction of your class grade by 1/3rd letter grade** (e.g., from a B to a B-).

Extra Credit Opportunities: In addition to the one required hour, you may also earn extra credit by completing up to 2 hours of additional research participation. Other extra credit opportunities *may* also be provided. More info will be provided about requirements for obtaining the extra credit and the amount of extra credit points offered as the term progresses.